

here is at the same time no necessity for us being over apprehensive. It would be wrong to be so. If on the one side there is much to warn us, on the other side there is much to cheer and animate us. Am I to be told that Rome will again triumph,—that she will recover her pristine vigour, and once more wave her red flag over all the nations of the world, when looking around me, I see so many circumstances in society forbidding such a supposition?—Am I to be told that Rome will conquer, when I see art, and science, and literature, and popular education, and improvements of every description, marching forward in every land with gigantic stride, while she, dotard as she must be, is acting the lag-gard, and shouting with a broken voice:—"Change I cannot?" Am I to be told that Rome will conquer, when I see Italy—beautiful, sunny Italy—the very emporium of her vast domain—shaking off her allegiance, asserting her independence and making her mountains and valleys ring with the gladsome songs of Christian liberty? Am I to be told that Rome will conquer, when I see Austria, tearing her concordats in pieces and pitching them to the winds; and Spain, proclaiming to her sons and daughters an unconditional emancipation from her thralldom! Am I to be told that Rome will conquer, when every wind that blows, every ship that sails into our ports, and every traveller that comes from distant lands, comes burdened with the cry, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen?"—Above all, am I to be told that Rome will conquer, when I see written in the book of inspiration, and written by the Spirit of Almighty God—these clear and burning words:—"The Lord shall consume her with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy her with the brightness of his coming?"—Round and round our globe, Popery may carry her crucifixes and her tiaras, her consecrated wafers, and her holy waters; but the gospel of Jesus will constantly follow her, will meet her and confront her with "justification by faith," the watchword of a rising or falling church. Round and round our globe, Popery may preach his holiness the only vicar of Christ, the immaculate Mary the chief friend of sinners, and pardon of sins by masses and the gold that perisheth; but the gospel will follow her, with the Bible the only standard of faith and practice, with Christ the only mediator between God and man, and with the blood of Jesus, the alone cleanser from all sin.—For a time, or times, it may be, for ought we know, Popery may somewhat awaken, somewhat spread, somewhat dominate; but God's time will come, and we may rest assured it will come, and then, then, "An angel shall come down from heaven having great power and the earth shall be

lightened with his glory. And he shall cry mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. And kings of the earth shall bewail her, and merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, and every shipmaster, and all companies in ships, and sailors and as many as trade by sea,—shall cast dust on their heads and exclaim, Alas! alas! for that great city, for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye holy apostles and prophets: for God hath avenged you on her." Rev. 18.

3. We must contend for a *Presbyterian faith* in opposition to the church government of other sects and parties. It seems necessary to do so, because at present some, of whom better things might be expected, are exhibiting a disposition, to treat lightly Presbyterianism as a system of ecclesiastical government. We do not deem it requisite to enter upon a statement of the nature of Presbyterianism, or of the proofs or arguments by which it is commonly sustained. With these you are all quite familiar.

There are only two points to which we solicit your attention. The first is, it is often asserted *no form of government* is laid down in scripture. This, of course, is an old theory, a very old one. It was well known in the days of the Westminister Divines and long before; and went by the name of the "perambulatory" system.—But it has been revived of late and advocated by some influential Presbyterians. It supposes that Christ and his apostles laid down no particular form of church government in scripture, but left christians to adopt whatever system suited their circumstances and localities; whatever system was agreeable to the majority of the people. Expediency, not scripture, is the rule by which we are to be guided. Against this faith, we must contend. That no system of church government should be appointed by Christ as king in his kingdom—for the church is Christ's kingdom,—would be one of the greatest anomalies in history—one of the greatest anomalies in the world. No society whatever exists, none can exist, without its laws and rules of government. Besides how are such scriptural terms as bishop, presbyter, deacon, overseer and many others to be explained without supposing an appointed system of government? It is enough simply to refer to this, and to urge that with all zeal and earnestness we ought to contend against such a faith. Is not the want of this government and the discipline necessarily connected with it, one of the principal causes of the divisions and heart burnings prevalent in some churches, even at the present day? The preservation of the jewel often depends on the casket in which it is kept.